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Economic and Social Council

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Agenda item 3
Basic programme of work of the Council

Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961, as amended by the Protocol amending the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961 (New York, 8 August 1975)

Proposal of amendments by the Plurinational State of Bolivia to article 49, paragraphs 1 (c) and 2 (e)

Note by the Secretary-General

In its decision 2009/250 of 30 July 2009, the Economic and Social Council, taking note of the note by the Secretary-General (E/2009/78) on the proposal of the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia to amend article 49, paragraphs 1 (c) and 2 (e), of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs of 1961 as amended by the 1972 Protocol,[1] decided, in accordance with article 47, paragraph 1, of the Convention as amended, to initiate the procedures established in paragraph 1 (b) of that article, which states that the parties shall be asked whether they accept the proposed amendment and also asked to submit to the Economic and Social Council any comments on the proposal.

The Secretary-General, acting in his capacity as depositary, communicated to the parties to the Convention the text of Council decision 2009/250 in a Depositary Notification[2] dated 30 July 2009.

The Secretary-General is hereby communicating to the Council a note verbale dated 31 January 2011 from the Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations (see annex).

[1] United Nations, *Treaty Series*, vol. 976, No. 14152.
[2] C.N.474.2009.TREATIES-3.

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Annex

Note verbale dated 31 January 2011 from the Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

[Original: Spanish]

The Permanent Mission of Ecuador to the United Nations presents its compliments to the Secretary-General and has the honour to refer to the proposal by the Government of the Plurinational State of Bolivia to amend article 49 of the Single Convention on Narcotic Drugs, 1961.

The United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, in particular articles 11, 12 and 13, requires that the rights of indigenous peoples shall be respected and protected, that indigenous peoples shall have the right to practise and revitalize their cultural traditions and customs and to manifest, practise, develop and teach their traditions and customs, and that States shall take effective measures to ensure that these rights are protected.

Consequently, Ecuador supports the amendment proposed by Bolivia to end the prohibition against coca leaf chewing, an indigenous cultural practice that does not affect and is not contrary to the necessary efforts to combat the illicit manufacture and trafficking of cocaine. The prohibition is unjustifiable and discriminates against indigenous peoples that maintain this ancestral practice.